

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A multiprocessor system, comprising:

a processing sub-system including a plurality of processors and a processor memory system;

5 a scalable network operable to couple the processing sub-system to an input/output (I/O) sub-system;

the I/O sub-system including a plurality of I/O interfaces;

10 the I/O interfaces each operable to couple a peripheral device to the multiprocessor system and to store copies of data from the processor memory system in the local cache for use by the peripheral device; and

15 a coherence domain comprising the processors and processor memory system of the processing sub-system and the local caches of the I/O sub-system.

2. The multiprocessor system of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the I/O interfaces comprises a Peripheral Component Interconnect (PCI) interface.

20 3. The multiprocessor system of Claim 1, wherein the scalable network comprises a plurality of routers.

25 4. The multiprocessor system of Claim 1, the processor memory system comprising a plurality of discrete processor memories.

30 5. The multiprocessor system of Claim 4, wherein the discrete processor memories are each dedicated to a processor.

6. The multiprocessor system of Claim 1, the processor memory system including a directory operable to identify data cached in an I/O interface.

5           7. The multiprocessor system of Claim 6, the  
processor memory system operable to invalidate a copy of  
data stored in a local cache of an I/O interface in  
response to a request for the data by a processor.

10           8. The multiprocessor system of Claim 1, the I/O  
interfaces each operable to pre-fetch data from the  
processor memory and to store the data in the local cache  
for use by a corresponding peripheral device.

9. A method for maintaining data at input/output (I/O) interfaces of a multiprocessor system, comprising:

coupling a plurality of processors to a processor memory system;

5 coupling a plurality of I/O interfaces to the processor memory;

coupling a peripheral device to each I/O interface;

10 caching copies of data in the processor memory system in the I/O interfaces for use by the peripheral devices; and

maintaining coherence between the copy of data in the I/O interfaces and data in the processor memory system.

15 10. The method of Claim 9, wherein at least one of the I/O interfaces comprises a Peripheral Component Interconnect (PCI) interface.

20 11. The method of Claim 9, further comprising coupling the I/O interfaces to the processor memory system through a scalable network.

25 12. The method of Claim 9, further comprising coupling the I/O interfaces to the processor memory system through a scalable network comprising a plurality of routers.

30 13. The method of Claim 9, wherein the processor memory system comprises a plurality of discrete processor memories.

14. The method of Claim 13, wherein each discrete processor memory is dedicated to a processor.

5 15. The method of Claim 9, further comprising identifying in the processor memory system data having a copy cached in the I/O interfaces.

10 16. The method of Claim 15, further comprising:  
invalidating a copy of data cached in an I/O interface in response to a request by a processor for the data; and

releasing the data to the processor after invalidation of the copy in the I/O interface.

15 17. The method of Claim 9, further comprising:  
pre-fetching data from the processor memory system;  
and

20 caching the data in an I/O interface for use by a corresponding peripheral device.

18. An input/output (I/O) interface, comprising:  
a peripheral communications port;

a local cache operable to store copies of data from  
a processor memory coupled to the I/O interface; and

5 a resource manager operable to invalidate outdated  
data from the local cache to maintain coherence with the  
processor memory.

10 19. The I/O interface of Claim 18, wherein the  
interface is a Peripheral Component Interconnect (PCI)  
interface.

20. The I/O interface of Claim 18, the resource  
manager further operable to invalidate copies of data  
15 from the local cache in response to instructions from the  
processor memory.

21. The I/O interface of Claim 18, wherein a copy  
of data is outdated upon expiration of a time period for  
20 storage of the copy.

22. A method for interfacing a peripheral device with a multiprocessor system, comprising:

storing copies of data in a processor memory system of the multiprocessor system in a local I/O memory at an interface for the peripheral device; and

maintaining coherence between data in the processor memory system and copies of data in the local I/O memory.

23. The method of Claim 22, further comprising maintaining coherence between data in the processor memory system and copies of data in the local I/O memory by at least removing outdated copies of data from the local I/O memory.

24. The method of Claim 22, further comprising maintaining coherence between data in the processor memory system and copies of data in the local I/O memory by at least removing copies of data from the local I/O memory in response to instructions from the processor memory system.

25. The method of Claim 23, wherein a copy of data is outdated upon expiration of a time period for storage of the copy.